

Kingdom Come - Extended Ending

by geistklempner

Category: Left Behind

Genre: Sci-Fi

Language: English

Characters: C. Rosenszweig, Rayford S.

Status: Completed

Published: 2016-04-13 00:34:17

Updated: 2016-04-13 00:34:17

Packaged: 2016-04-27 19:01:59

Rating: K

Chapters: 1

Words: 4,659

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: The final battle, a new heaven, a new earth. And beyond the horizon...

Kingdom Come - Extended Ending

The Last Day of the Millennium

THE EARTH teemed with billions of people, and the end of the Millennium was vastly different from the beginning. That was no surprise to Rayford, who kept up with the news, often sitting before the television with Chaim Rosenszweig. "We don't have one trained soldier," he said. "And we don't need one. Not a hair on the head of a believer will be harmed by the biggest fighting force the world has ever seen."

Daily for the past three years, the news had abounded with stories of millions of adherents to the Other Light, growing bolder by the minute. Their printing presses and electronically transmitted messages blanketed the globe, recruiting new members, amassing a weapons stockpile and training a fighting force a thousand times bigger than had been aggregated for the Battle of Armageddon a millennium before.

Far above the Earth, a large, spindly creature was crawling out from an equally spindly egg, gentle magnetic fields pushing it free of the construction dock. The ship was officially unnamed; its drop pods, exploration craft and lifeboats had been named after pioneers and stalwarts of humanity's true last stand - "'Patrick Rose'", "'Enrico Forlanini'", "'Cendrillon Jospin'", so many more. The ship, itself, was simply the ship - there was no other. Maritime superstition dictated that a christening was required, but given how most of the crew saw the ship's role as humanity's champion against all superstition, the ceremony had been as private as possible, with the captain breaking an ancient bottle of pre-Rapture wine on a bulkhead right before the first full system test when nobody was looking. A

maintenance drone vacuumed up the mess without a comment.

The ship's secret name was that of a long-gone lover, lost to the One Above All. It was sufficient. It would have to be. Humanity's latest act of optimism, a monument to the will to survive 910 years in the making.

Rayford was amazed that God allowed such a brazen, wanton act of defiance on the parts of so many as they symbolically thumbed their noses at Jesus and the earthly rulers He had chosen from the ages. Even in Israel, tanks rumbled through the streets, uniformed soldiers marched, and missiles and rockets were paraded before the faithful.

Television broadcasts from around the world showed the same and worseâ€"what seemed like entire people groups dressed in the all-black uniform of the fighting forces of the Other Light. Of course they were all younger than one hundred and thus relegated to the status of childrenâ€"rebellious, articulate, passionate, defiant, furious children. But they were also brilliant and had written songs and poems and speeches anticipating the day their leader, the Other Light personified, would beâ€"in their wordsâ€" "foolishly released" by his captor.

The fifty-mile-long structure carried a portion of the thousands of people who had managed to at least partially break off one or the other cosmic script of unconditional obedience or unthinking enmity. Some had been frozen just before their allotted time on Earth. Some had given the prime of their lives to solve just one of the myriad problems that humanity's first starship required to create. Some were awake now, to operate the ship. All had given their genius, their tenacity. The irony was not lost on anybody that the great ship carried enough livestock, seeds, and genetic material to merit taking a particular Biblical name that everybody had gone lengths to not mention throughout the construction - a large swear-jar of physical money, filled over a millennium from accidental use of that single word, had been used to buy the last Earthside meal for the active crew.

"The so-called God Almighty will rue the day He returns to us our leader, for it will mean the greatest comeback, the most decisive defeat, the most gargantuan victory of any foe over another in the history of mankind."

Warships, tanks, personnel carriers, bombs, rockets, launchers, and all manner of battle paraphernalia from tents to food and medical supplies had been arriving at Holy Land ports daily for months, vast encampments growing around the entire expanded city of Jerusalem.

"We're clear of the dock. Commencing fine attitude adjustment maneuvers."

"Type 2 tenders are being abandoned and jettisoned."

"Type 1 tenders are docking."

"Bussard ramjet ready."

Someone in the active crew called a vote through the personal area

network, and it passed, requiring it to be presented to the captain for approval. Should the unmanned ancillary vessels be thrown at the Earth, a final act of defiance?

"We took in almost all the bipropellant. Navigation, put all the excess fuel into the last Type 2 tenders, and chart an impact trajectory on the Temple."

A few cheers. The captain was content to let God and the Devil have their silly war, but this breach of pacifism was a promise being kept, to the Other Light committee long ago that authorized some support for the construction of orbital weapons. The newly redesigned kinetic strike vehicles reported their presence to the swarming army below, and asked for orders. They were told to wait for the Eternal Enemy's command. Their trajectory set by the initial retrograde burn, they acknowledged the command, but had little way of obeying it.

Rayford was stunned that even many of the faithful were outraged and terrified by this. Oh, it was awful, terrible and disconcerting to see the plains filled with warriors and their tools of war. But the only reason the government allowed it was because they knew"as did Rayford and his friends"the schemes of the marauding invaders were futile.

"All this time, Rayford," Chaim said, his voice weak. "All this waiting. And the prophecies are clear that this will be entirely anticlimactic. Think of the irony of that."

"Ready as we'll ever be."

One particular timer in the ship's operating system reached zero-plus-three-sigma, and was displayed on every indicator that wasn't being used for maneuvering. Earth's final hour was upon mankind. "... docking complete, thirty seconds behind schedule."

"Port sensors to main visualization array. We owe it to our predecessors to see this play through."

Rayford remembered when the airwaves had been full of praises to the Lord Christ, who ruled the earth from His throne. Now it was as if people on both sides of the conflict had forgotten that He was still there, still sovereign, still destined to triumph. Debates, speeches, charges and countercharges filled the airwaves now.

And the enemy continued to arrive. Every nation on earth sent fighting forces. And while many believers fled the Holy Land, others vowed to fight the Other Light to the death.

A brief high-bandwidth data burst containing a brief farewell from every member of the crew was beamed down, to be missed by all those who had reverted to analog transmission and to be ignored by the rest amidst the great loop of old arguments cycling back and forth.

The only question on the final day was the timing of God's release of His archenemy of the ages.

_That became obvious soon enough when the countless followers of the Other Light announced that their centuries-long project to

manufacture weaponry unlike anything that had ever been seen on earth had resulted in all that could be seen, blotting out much of the landscape of Israel and surrounding the City of David._

For a thousand years there had been no wars or rumors of wars, no nation rising against nation; now TOL had emerged with a highly organized, trained, precision-tuned army of hundreds of millions. It finally became obvious that God had released Satan, according to the Scriptures, when the warriors from all over the world, "whose number is as the sand of the sea," were finally in place, gathered for battle.

"Sound and fury, signifying nothing."

"Comms, raise TOL command. We should try again, one last time."

No answer came. Frustrated even while expecting it, the captain aimed the broad-gain antenna towards Jerusalem, on a commercial frequency. "TOL forces, this is High Sky Actual. We recommend either a first strike immediately, or an orderly retreat. Do not wait further."

No reaction; not even a way to know if the message had been received through the radio noise of millions of vehicles trying to coordinate an advance.

For months they had been arriving, first in small groups and finally in great battalions, carefully following orders and surrounding "the camp of the saints and the beloved city."

As the entire world looked onâ€"many by television, many from what they hoped were safe distancesâ€"the colossal fighting force suddenly came alive with a buzz of anticipation. Clearly Satan had been released and was in their midst, preparing to show himself and lead them. The cosmic battle of the ages between the forces of good and evil, light and darkness, life and death, was about to commence.

Rayford and his friends gathered on the veranda of Cameron's estate, where they were allowed to see this all unfold. And Rayford knew it was only by the supernatural grace of God that his thousand-plus-year-old eyes were able to see every detail. It was as if God Himself was revealing everything to the theater of Rayford's mind.

The millions-strong enemy created a cacophony of rumbling and jangling, sending dust billowing as far as the eye could see. And suddenly rising from within those masses and marching to the fore came Satan himself, as a shining light, a gleaming sword raised high.

"We've got activity!"

"Zoom in."

All that could be discerned from above the sky was a point of white light, on all wavelengths, right behind the sieging army's front line. Lucifer's voice needed no amplification, but no voice could pierce the void unaided; to the crew, it simply looked like an optical glitch. Each had written an epic speech to attribute to the Eternal Enemy at one time or another, of course, some classical, some

angsty, some even magnanimous. Each had sadly realized that the actual speech would be rousing to the appropriate earth-bound team, no matter the content.

"And now," he shouted, somehow able to be heard for miles, "I come to claim what has been rightfully mine since the dawn of time: the very throne of God!"

As Satan advanced toward the temple, the noise of his endless troops drowning out the sounds of nature, God Himself seemed to allow Rayford to stand taller than he had in centuries. It was as if he were a young man again, and he longed to join his Savior on the front lines. He was aware that his friends also stood tall beside him, eager, anticipating, knowing the side of the righteous would prevail.

Despite all the attacks of the evil one throughout the aeons of time, his efforts were doomed to an ill end. And as Rayford Steele and his compatriots looked on "all of them sinners redeemed by the blood of the Lamb who sat on the throne" Jesus rose to face His challenger for one last time.

The Alpha and Omega, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Lion of Judah, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, the Rock, the Savior, the Christ stood in the courtyard of His temple.

"There He is! Temple courtyard. Kinetic impactors en route."

"ETA to impact?"

"Two minutes. We were a little late."

"So it went. ETA to stellarator self-sustain?"

"Five minutes. We're a little early."

Satan, silenced for a thousand years, shrieked, "Charge!"

Jesus responded quietly, "I AM WHO I AM."

In the silence of space, the crew looked on as two points of light faced each other on the screens, the gargantuan army blindly swarming forward as if they were peasants with spears rather than a mechanized fighting force.

And with that, the clouds rolled back and the heavens opened, and orange and yellow and red mountains of white-hot, roiling flames burst forth. Satan's entire throng "men, women, weapons, everything" was vaporized in an instant, leaving around the holy mountain a ring of ash that soon wafted away in the breeze.

Satan looked about him and slowly lowered his sword. He appeared to have something to say and even drew breath to say it, but he fell silent.

Far above the clouds, the crew looked on. The kinetic impactors, their trajectory calculated hastily, had reentered the atmosphere too late, just barely on time to be obliterated by the shockwave.

"... he's still there!" The few who wore hats took them off. A toupee followed. Deluded as they may have been, TOL were comrades.

"We've lost all local telemetry. Jesus' shockwave was the last thing we picked up."

The captain couldn't shake the feeling that the Messiah's utterance had pierced the void of space to be heard directly, but knew that it was probably just the cellular implant sounding off just before the bridge speakers.

In the sudden wasteland, the two points of lights took a more human form as the sensors recalibrated. Seen from above the sky, they faced each other silently. A few screen displayed the appropriate Bible passages; most of the crew decided, out of respect for the end of the world, to follow along.

The comms officer tried to pick up audio from what few receivers had not been incinerated, just out of not wanting to leave a job incomplete.

And Jesus spoke. "You, O evil one, were once full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.

"You were my anointed cherub. I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you.

"You became filled with violence, and you sinned. Worse, you led countless others to unbelief. Therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; and now I cast you to the ground, I lay you before kings, that they might gaze at you.

"You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities. All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; you have become a horror, and shall be no more forever."

Satan dropped his sword and fell shuddering to his knees.

From within the temple, King David emerged and said with a loud voice, "This is Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

_David retreated, and Jesus merely lifted a hand and opened His palm.

A seam in the cosmos opened before Satan. Flames and black smoke poured from where the Beast and the False Prophet writhed on their knees screaming, "Jesus is Lord!"_

"... Science Officer, please tell me that was a glitch?"

"No Captain. What I wouldn't give for a spectrometer on site! The geometry alone-"

"Remote recordings will have to do, I'm afraid. Is there a danger?"

"Theoretically yes" the Psychohistorian responded "but the script is pretty much locked in. There's literally nothing we can do, and there's nothing they will do that's not in the last pages of the Bible."

'No bang, no whimper, Earth's time ends with a psalm then. So, this is the last bridge we must burn.'

Satan cried out, "Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!"

Jesus closed His fingers and Satan was thrown into the abyss, the seam sealing to muffle the screams of the three who would be tormented day and night forever and ever in the lake of fire and brimstone.

Suddenly Rayford got an idea of what it had been like for Irene and Raymie to be raptured. He found himself lifted from the veranda, muscle and flesh and hair restored to the way he had looked and felt at about age thirty. His clothes had been exchanged for a gleaming white robe, and as he and all his friends and loved ones ascended through the ceiling and the roof and flew toward the holy mountain, Rayford knew from his depths that his mind, too, had finally been glorified.

The only thing that mattered now was to praise and glorify Jesus, the lover and Savior of his soul. As he and the billions who had lived through the Millennium ascended, he saw descending the most beautiful and massive foursquare city of transparent gold, so stunning that Rayford knew his finite mind would never have been able to take it in.

"What's that structure?"

"... That's... actually quite beautiful." The inverted-color image, when it was its turn to be cycled, looked like an early representation of cyberspace, cyan on black.

As the elect and redeemed of the ages happily gathered in the new Jerusalem, they watched in awe as the final resurrection occurred below them. From every nook and cranny on the earth and from the seas and below the earth came the bodies of all the men and women in history who had died outside of Christ.

_And descending from the heavens came Jesus, sitting on a great white throne. With the saints above Him and the resurrected dead amassed in the heavens around Him, the very earth and sky flew from Him. Fire from the heavens and from within the earth ignited the globe, and in a flash it was incinerated and blown into tiny flaming particles that

hurtled through space._

"It's gone! The Earth is gone!"

"Gravity wave detected! Delta-cee is... we're measuring it, but it's definitely in the negatives."

"The Alcubierre drive guys are going to have a field day with this. But that's for the next ship."

"There's something in the middle of the debris cloud..."

"Finish getting the gravity wave readings. Stellarator?"

"Ready."

"Begin seed reaction mass injection."

Rayford now understood the Scriptures that foretold of this great judgment, as below him he saw the dead, small and great, standing before Jesus. These were those whom, according to Revelation 20:5, "did not live again until the thousand years were finished." As the Bible had foretold, the sea had given up the dead who were in it, and "Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them." All these billions of the sinful dead now resurrected stood in shame before Jesus. Rayford worshiped with all who had escaped this fateful hour.

Arrayed before Jesus were three great books: the Book of Life, containing the name of every person who had ever lived; the Book of Works, containing every righteous or evil deed they ever committed; and the Lamb's Book of Life, containing only those who had trusted in Christ for their salvation. Rayford's glorified mind allowed him to understand that he was, of course, listed in the Book of Life, but he had been forgiven for any misdeed associated with his name in the Book of Works. And that he and everyone with him in the beautiful city of God were listed in the Lamb's Book of Life, while all the desolate souls hovering about the throne were not.

"Any movement?"

"Negative. Wait, hold on... Tethers out."

"What are those things around the throne?"

"We're getting a lot of pink noise on all audio frequencies..."

"Keep recording" the captain interrupted "we'll have a long while to do analysis."

High above the sky, machines designed to listen to the universe's heartbeat documented the final moments of time on Earth in terms of mass and energy. Meaning would have to wait.

_What a contrast! Everyone with Rayford had longed to see Jesus and lived for the day they would be with Him in paradise. Those waiting for judgment looked as if they dreaded even looking at Him, as if they would have given anything to be anywhere else in the

universe._

In his new state, Rayford also instinctively understood God's economy of time. Dealing fairly with that massive throng for even just a few minutes each would takeâ€”in the earthly measure of timeâ€”millions of years. But to God, a thousand years is as a day and a day as a thousand years. The Lord somehow dealt with each person individually, calling out his or her sins and transgressions and assigning punishmentâ€”all would suffer in the lake of fire, but some worse than others, such as those scoffers who had led others astray, especially children. Yet in what seemed a matter of moments, it was over. The unbelieving dead had been judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. Then Jesus cast Death and Hades into the lake of fire, and all not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life were cast into the lake of fire.

Rayford had the feeling that the many verdicts he had just heard would have horrified him in the old days. And yet now, hearing the offenses of those who had rejected and rejected and rejected the One who was "not willing that any should perish" and seeing Jesus' own tears as He pronounced the sentences, Rayford understood as never before that Jesus sent no one to hell. They chose their own paths.

Now, with the earth and its atmosphere obliterated by fire and the wicked dead banished to the lake of fire for all eternity, all that remained was the new Jerusalem and Jesus on His throne. And in an instant Jesus created an entirely new earth, onto which the Holy City descended.

The composite image came up from a projector on a bulkhead that had been painted white; building a three-d screen of that size would have been impractical. The great ship launched tethered probes, like tiny sprouts from a rhizome, who then focused their sensors to improve the ship's overall resolution, showing the massive arcology, transparent golden arches and massive golden walls.

"Captain, it's back! The Earth is back. It must have been an illusion..."

"I don't think so, not any more than all of this was. We registered a gravity wave pair."

"I don't know if that's the Earth at all."

"Let's find out. Spectroscopy scan."

Suddenly Rayford saw what John the revelator had seen more than three millennia before: a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. There was no more sea. A loud voice from heaven said, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

_Then Jesus said from the throne, "Behold, I make all things new. It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone."_

Jesus stood and faced the billions of believers, stretched wide His arms, and announced, "You chose to believe in Me and accept My death on the cross for your sins. My resurrection from the dead proved this sacrifice was acceptable to My Father. Therefore, on the basis of your faith, I invite you into the eternal city the Father and I have been preparing for you."

"This is as real as it gets. I'd guess everybody that's left is either in the arcology... or burning somewhere."

"Any activity from around the arcology?"

"Readings stable. Looks like nothing is going on outside. Marginal life signs."

Rayford hardly knew where to look. Below him was the new earth, majestic, endless, beautiful, as the original Garden of Eden must have looked. And all around him the great city bore the very glory of God. Her light was like a most precious jasper stone, clear as crystal. She had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

"... Same mass, same atmosphere... the main difference seems to be that there are rivers and scattered lakes, but no large bodies of water. Optical confirms only one source of infrared. New rotation period seems tidally locked to the Sun. Eternal dawn."

The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The city was laid out as a square, its length as great as its breadth. The wall was of jasper, and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundations of the wall were adorned with all kinds of precious stones. The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street was also pure gold, like transparent glass.

There was no temple in it, and Rayford knew why. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb were its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon, for there would be no more night, no need for a lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God, the Lamb, would be the light.

The ship's operating system registered a vote being called, to burn retrograde, release the drop pods and return home. It fell far short, and the Captain was discreetly notified by a line of text on the HUD.

"Science officer, are we ready?"

"Ready. The gravity wave pair data has been recorded. We've learned all we can here."

"Fantastic. Helm, take her out. All hands, brace!"

The ship's Bussard ram scoop unfolded in a web of gossamer strands even as the probes were reeled in, and for a moment, the huge machine seemed to drift. Once it had precisely aligned itself to its destination, a massive pillar of blue light shot from the vessel's stern.

Kapteyn's Star. A century-long trip, relativistically condensed into two years ship's time. Second fastest moving star in the sky. Old planet, nitrogen-rich atmosphere, thick purple fungal mats covering the surface. The old-style light bulbs at the captain's console were mostly green. The reaction wheels momentum-dumped, and the bridge crew was jostled by the acceleration as humanity's first starship sped away.

"Psych, so what happens to them now?"

"They bask in the glory of God, or burn in the lake of fire. Forever. This is the end of the timeline, no further activity predicted."

"So... nothing."

"Pretty much, as far as we can tell."

The only residents of the new heaven and new earth were those written in the Lamb's Book of Life. And they would reign forever and ever.

"And what happens to us?"

The psychohistorian smiled at the question from one of the bridge stations. "Everything."

End
file.